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SEGREGATION AT THE BROADWAY HIGH SCHOOL, SEATTLE

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There has been more or less discussion in Seattle for some time relative to the advisability of giving instruction to the boys and girls separately in the high schools. Some have even gone so far as to urge separate high schools and have indorsed this policy more on account of moral reasons. Those who have favored instruction in segregated classes, but not in separate schools, are moved to do so, not for moral or social reasons, but rather for purely educational betterment.

It is held that as boys, as a class, between the ages of fourteen and seventeen or eighteen differ in point of maturity and mental alertness from girls of the same age, it is better for them and also for the girls to be instructed separately, because neither responds or reacts in the same manner.

The Board of Education, after giving the matter careful consideration, decided at the opening of the last school year to give separate instruction to boys and girls in one of the high schools, and Broadway, being the largest school, thereby furnishing the easiest conditions, was chosen for the experiment. The segregation was made as thorough as possible without increasing unnecessarily the cost of operation. The number of boys', girls', and mixed classes for the first semester was as given in Table I.

The segregation of classes for the second semester was in nearly the same proportion.

The boys' classes were assigned to men teachers and the girls' classes to women teachers, as far as it was possible to do so.

It might be said that the pupils accepted the new plan in the best of spirit and did much to give it a fair test. There was more objection on the part of the girls and their parents than there was on the part of the boys. The teachers were divided in opinion as to the wisdom of segregation, but were glad to give it a trial.

At the close of the first semester the reports showed that the boys had improved in scholastic grades in nearly all of the subjects, while the girls' record did not show much, if any, improvement over the same period of the preceding year. The number of boys on the honor roll (receiving 4 E's or better) increased 102 per cent while the girls increased only 6 per cent. There is but little doubt that by having the boys and girls in separate classes the standard of marking changed somewhat. In the English work, where the boys had formerly competed with the girls somewhat at a disadvantage, and were graded accordingly, we saw the greatest change. The number of boys doing "G" work or better in English increased 9 per cent, while the girls showed no gain.

TABLE I

	Boys' Classes	Girls' Classes	Mixed Classes
English.....	29	28	6
Mathematics.....	21	18	2
History.....	17	21	3
Latin.....	8	8	3
French and Spanish.....	8	11	5
German.....	6	9	2
Science.....	7	5	9
Commercial.....	7	7	13
Manual training.....	16	18
	119	125	43

Total number of classes, 287.

The second semester gives a better comparison as to the effect of segregation, and I submit in Table II the record made in all subjects for the spring semester of 1914 without segregation and the spring semester of 1915 with segregation.

In compiling a report from the teachers at the close of the year regarding segregation, fifty-three of them expressed their views concerning it. The remaining teachers either had all boys' or all girls' work previously or had no opinion formulated. Twenty-four of the teachers were in favor of segregation and some of their reasons were as follows:

"The boys have been able to have more men teachers, which is of great value to them."

TABLE II
NUMBER PER 100 ENROLLED IN THE DIFFERENT SUBJECTS GETTING "G" OR ABOVE

	English I and II	English I to IV	All English	Algebra I and II	Geometry I and II	All Mathematics	History I and II	History I to IV	All History	Latin I and II	Latin I to IV	All Latin	German I and II	All German	French I and II	French I to IV	All French	Spanish I and II	Spanish I to IV	All Spanish	Commercial, Semesters I and II	Commercial, Semesters I to IV	All Commercial	Manual Arts, Semesters I and II	All Manual Arts	Science I and II	Science I to IV	All Science	All Subjects
<i>Boys:</i>																													
1914: Not segregated	48	53	59	41	44	46	43	45	54	33	39	40	36	39	37	48	48	28	25	26	37	37	37	63	69	50	54	55	49
1915: Segregated . . .	52	59	60	56	54	53	65	68	69	34	40	40	31	34	38	40	40	59	59	59	33	48	48	61	66	45	45	50	57
<i>Girls:</i>																													
1914: Not segregated	64	71	79	49	48	51	62	61	65	43	46	56	62	68	49	56	56	45	51	53	51	50	45	81	82	68	70	67	65
1915: Segregated . . .	67	63	71	54	54	53	59	58	67	40	41	43	69	57	51	49	49	37	37	37	30	42	38	83	81	75	75	68	62

Grades: G equals 80 to 90 per cent; E equals 90 to 100 per cent.

"Helpful, especially for the first two years, because the problem is simplified. The work is approached entirely from one standpoint, that of the girls or that of the boys."

"There is more freedom in talking and I think also in thinking."

"In physics, I have been able to leave out much of the most difficult part for the girls and do more extensive work in the parts in which they are naturally most interested. The work of the boys has been made to include a great deal that I have never found time to touch in mixed classes. I would say that boys have done 30 to 40 per cent more work than in mixed classes. The brighter girls have probably lost the fund of outside information, applications, etc., that the boys contribute to the recitation."

"The standards in a class are nearer what they ought to be as a unit of ability."

Seventeen teachers were opposed to segregation and twelve saw no beneficial results. Some of the reasons given by those opposed were as follows:

"I do not find segregation helpful for intellectual reasons. The girls are too much given to merely memorizing and the boys to discussing and generalizing from insufficient data."

"Discipline is harder in the boys' classes. The boys are not so careful as to body posture and general courtesy when alone."

"As a parent of two girls at Broadway, I feel a distinct loss to them, in that they are deprived of the privilege of having any men teachers except in rare instances."

"My girls have missed the practical suggestions contributed by the boys and my boys have lost the tone and idealism offered by girls."

"Segregation has destroyed variety of interpretation in the study of English literature (advanced classes)."

"Girls' classes are too inert. I miss the energy contributed by the boys."

After considering carefully the improvement made by the pupils in some definite subjects due to segregation, the following recommendation was made to the Superintendent:

1. That we continue as far as possible to segregate all the science classes. We are making a big improvement in the adaptation of the science work best suited for boys and girls.

2. That we segregate the English classes for the first two years. There is little to be gained after the first two years by segregation in the English work and much to be lost by the pupils not being in mixed classes.

3. That we continue to segregate the classes in mathematics.

4. That we segregate history classes for the first year. The very nature of our government and society makes it of advantage to have the advanced history work taught to boys and girls together. They need to get the common viewpoint.

5. That we have no segregation in the foreign languages. We have not profited by segregation in these subjects, and it is difficult to arrange the classes owing to the size.

6. The commercial classes cannot be segregated to any advantage, owing to the nature of the work.

7. The manual-training work segregates itself.

It should be the general policy to assign men as teachers for boys' classes and women for the girls. This rule, however, should be open to *generous exceptions*, as we have women who are better fitted than men for beginning pupils and on the other hand girls should come under the influence of some men teachers during their high-school course. We lessen the general efficiency of the school when we assign teachers more or less arbitrarily as we have done this year.

From the recommendations that I have made, I believe that we would get the largest amount of good from the segregated and mixed classes. The teachers' objections to the present plan would in a large measure be erased.